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(54) Bead dispensing system

(57) A bead dispensing system is provided for delivering small amounts of substances onto substrates. The system can include, for example, a movable support structure having an array of spaced-apart projections depending from its lower side. An attraction source, such as a vacuum, magnetic, and/or electrostatic force, is operable at each projection end region to attract and retain one bead. The projection array can be

aligned with an array of bead-receiving regions of a substrate, e.g., an array of spaced-apart wells of a microplate or card. In one embodiment, a plurality of reagent-carrying beads are picked up, retained at respective projection end regions, and moved to a location over a multi-well plate. The beads are then released in a fashion permitting each bead to land in a respective well. The system of the invention is particularly useful for fabricating arrays of reagents.

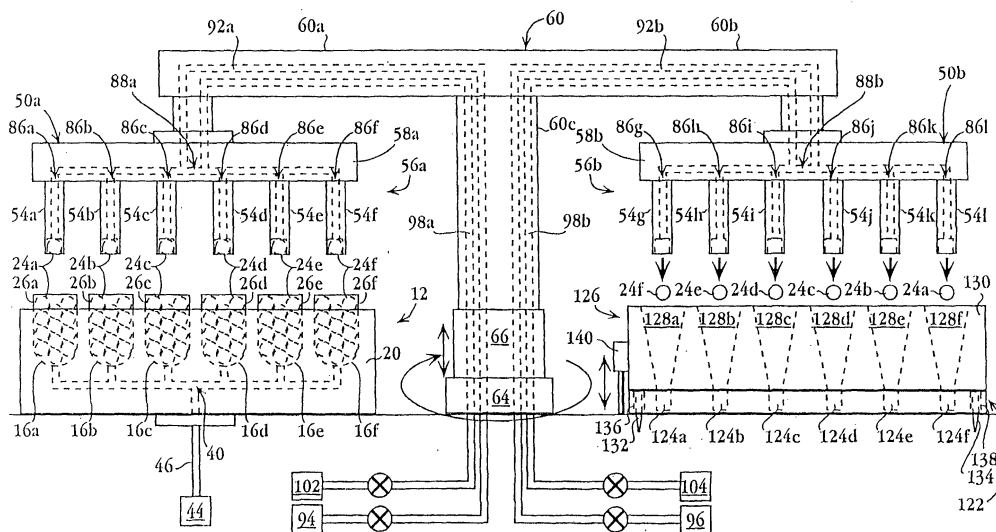


Fig. 1



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		17 May 2004	Hocquet, A
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A	* page 22, line 7 - page 23, line 17; figure 12 * * page 19, line 11 - line 25 * -----	12	
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Place of search <b>THE HAGUE</b>		Date of completion of the search <b>17 May 2004</b>	Examiner <b>Hocquet, A</b>
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone                      Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category                      A : technological background                      O : non-written disclosure                      P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention                      E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date                      D : document cited in the application                      L : document cited for other reasons                      .....                      &amp; : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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